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A WORD TO OUR FRIENDS.

IN the prosecution of the work intrusted to them, the Board of Directors of the American and Foreign Christian Union have endeavored to follow the leadings of Providence, and to do what would meet your hearty approval. They have therefore sought to sustain the missions that were established at the commencement of the year, and also to carry the service into new fields opening around them. By the divine blessing upon the labors performed, they are enabled now to report most encouraging results. And in asking your special attention to the condition of the treasury, and the necessity that exists for your immediate aid, they feel called upon to assure you that the progress of their experience deepens their conviction of the practicability as well as importance of the object the Society has in view.

Many and precious are the fruits which the efforts of the Union have brought forth. Some of these fruits are "seen and known of all men," while others, perhaps not less valuable to the cause of Evangelical religion, and of religious freedom, are less open and observed. The Society has done much to guard the Sabbath against the assaults of those whose early training in other lands prepared them to countenance and to seek its desecration—to repel the assaults that have been made by the Romish hierarchy upon our system of common-schools, and to set in motion a train of things to secure to American citizens the rights of conscience and of worship, when travelling or sojourning in foreign lands. It has carried the Gospel in its purity to many thousands of Papists in the United States, gathered multitudes of them and their children into Evangelical churches and Sabbath-schools, and very great numbers, as it is believed, into the fold of Christ, the true Shepherd of the sheep.

And a fruit not of small worth in the estimate of our citizens, nor to be lightly overlooked, is that awakened interest, which now pervades all parts of our country, in relation to the maintenance and diffusion of Evangelical and Protestant truths and principles. In this awakened interest, under God, we recognize an agency which,

we trust, will promptly and effectually repel all invaders, and prove the safety of the institutions peculiar to our form of government, and dear to the pious, and to all true-hearted Americans.

And in foreign lands, where "the Man of Sin" holds the populations in ignorance, superstition, degrading servitude and idolatry, it is doing an important work. Ireland, Sweden, Belgium, France, Sardinia, Italy, South-America, the West-Indies, and Canada, have each felt its salutary influence. From all these places, at times, the most cheering intelligence has been received, affording ample compensation for the past, and constituting powerful appeals for future exertions. This intelligence has been laid before the public, and the ordinary means for securing supplies have been kept in operation.

But through political excitement (for the creation and perpetuating of which the Board has no responsibility) the multiplication of objects of charity, and especially the increase of denominational zeal, overshadowing the grace of co-operative efforts, in many churches, to an extent greater than has been known before in more than a quarter of a century; and through the spirit of worldliness generally confessed and mourned, as prevailing in all denominations, the receipts of the treasury, like those of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, have fallen several thousand dollars short of the amount received last year at this date. Increased efforts, therefore, need to be made, if the Board are enabled to forward to the various stations under their care, the appropriations that have already been voted to them.

Hitherto the Board have forborne to make the statement now submitted, in the hope that it would be rendered unnecessary. But they have entered the last quarter of the fiscal year, and in justice to the friends, and to the trust reposed in them, in their judgment they ought not any longer to withhold it. Before the first day of April next, the appropriations voted (and they are the least that the interests of the missions would allow) must be paid, or great embarrassment must ensue.

To France, Switzerland, Belgium, Ireland, and Sardinia, remittances should immediately be sent, while the missions in Canada, the West-Indies, and South-America, ought not to be kept another day without supplies.

In the mean time the work in the Home Field can not be safely overlooked. "The laborer is worthy of his hire." The missionaries, both at home and abroad, have labored faithfully and well, and with good results. *They need support.* They do not ask, nor receive a large allowance. They labor hard, and practise economy and much self-denial, and expect and hope for nothing beyond support in the plainest form. *Shall they not have it?* We can not doubt that every member and friend of the Society will answer in the affirmative; for it is but simple justice, and there is no lack of funds in the land. There was never so much wealth in the hands of the American Churches and of the friends of the Society, as at the present hour. For ability, therefore, to meet the claims upon them and to carry on the work committed to their care, the Board must look to the numerous friends of the Union, to whom God has intrusted the means requisite.

And with this frank avowal of its wants, at this time, they can not

believe that they will be suffered to look to them in vain. They are persuaded that those, whose influence has called the Society into existence and active coöperation, who know *the vastness and wants of the field it occupies, and the unparalleled importance of the work to be done in it, in preparing the way for the conversion of the world to Christ, will not suffer it to halt for want of a few thousand dollars.* They will, therefore, respectfully wait for their responses. And in the mean time, they would, in like manner, ask of every person who may read this communication: Have YOU made a donation this year, to the American and Foreign Christian Union?

In view of the *increased prices* of labor, and of articles of living, which augment the costs of sustaining missionary operations, *have you increased your contributions*, so as to render the Society the relative amount of aid which you ought?

Perhaps you are a Pastor: if so, have you given this Society that place in your sympathies and prayers, which its excellent work merits, and obtained from your flock a generous donation to its treasury this year? If your people have not yet made a contribution, will you not see to it, that they have an opportunity to do so soon? If an agent of the Society can not visit, and preach to your people about it, will YOU not preach to them, and forward the avails of your effort to the treasury *before* the fiscal year closes? It will close the last day of March next. By a little effort on your part, dear reader, in conjunction with others, the anxiety of the Board may be removed, the usefulness of the Society protected, the wants of Missionaries relieved, and possession may be kept of all that has been gained in the dark and dreary domains of "the Man of Sin." You may, whether a minister or layman, by bringing this cause forward in the Church, on the Sabbath, or at the Monthly Concert, (and we trust the time is not far distant when it will have its place at the monthly concert, in every church,) or by stirring up yourself and others to labor, and collect funds for it, exert, perhaps, precisely that agency which, in the divine economy, is requisite for the ultimate overthrow of his kingdom, "whose coming is after the manner of Satan," and bring upon you the blessings of many "who are ready to perish." By indifference to this call, and allowing your brethren to labor on without your prayers, and your prompt and effective assistance, you MAY cause deep sorrow to the already afflicted, and leave in the darkness of Papal night, many who were just beginning hopefully to inquire for the "way of life." But we will confidently expect your liberal coöperation, and close by stating that all remittances may be sent to Mr. Edward Vernon, Assistant-Treasurer, No. 156 Chambers street, New-York.

AN AUDIENCE OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF SARDINIA.

In submitting the following letter from the Secretary for the Foreign Department, at London, England, it is proper to state that the Rev. Dr. McClure left New-York on the 17th of November last, to visit the British Isles and various places on the continent of Europe, in behalf of the Society — to do in relation to our future operations, what only a special agent in person can well do. He will probably return so as to be present at the anniversary meeting of the Society, in May next. In the mean time, in addition to other service, he will discharge the duties usually rendered at our Chapel in Rome during the winter. He expected to reach that city before Christmas, and probably did not fail in his expectation. At London he found on foot a movement in behalf of religious freedom, and having taken part in it has given us the following letter, namely:

London, Dec. 4, 1855.

Rev. Dr. Fairchild:

My Dear Brother: During the few days I have been here, I have found the minds of our brethren of the Evangelical Alliance all taken up with "one idea," and one that happens to be a reality, to wit, his Majesty, the King of Sardinia. This monarch, attended by several of his ministers of State, has been making a visit of a few days to the Queen of England. He is immensely popular with the English, both as one of their "allies" in this burdensome war with Russia, and as a liberal and constitutional king.

Seizing the occasion of his presence among them, the Committee for Promoting Religious Liberty, founded at Hamburg, in 1853, at its meeting held November 28th, the Earl of Shaftesbury in the chair, resolved to invite the officers of the great religious Societies of Great Britain and Ireland to sign a Memorial to the King of Sardinia. This document was handsomely engrossed on a sheet of parchment nearly a yard square, having two other similar sheets attached, filled with the signatures, headed by the venerable Archbishop of Canterbury. The address was couched in the following manly and respectful terms:

To His Majesty Victor Emmanuel II., King of Sardinia.

Sire: We, whose names are undersigned, officially connected with various Religious Societies, representing almost all bodies of British Christians, desire to express to your Majesty the satisfaction which we feel, in common with all our friends, at the cordial Alliance which exists between your Majesty and our gracious Sovereign, of which your Majesty's visit to this country is a gratifying proof.

Observing as we have done with sincere pleasure the enlightened policy of your Majesty's government, we beg with profound respect to offer to your Majesty our grateful acknowledgments for the liberty which has been granted to our fellow-Christians in Sardinia, your Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects, who do not belong to the Roman Catholic Church.

We venture to assure your Majesty that the deference which has thus been shown to the supreme authority of Him "by whom Kings reign and Princes decree justice," and who claims it as His Divine prerogative to be the only Lord and Sovereign of the human conscience, has been and will be to the people of this country the occasion of many and devout thanksgivings, and of their earnest prayers, that it may please Almighty God long to preserve your Majesty at the head of a free people and a constitutional government, and by His blessing, to make your reign increasingly prosperous and happy.

We are assured that there is no greater security for the throne of Monarchs on the one hand, and for the prosperity of their subjects on the other, than the maintenance of the

principle, that it is the right of all men to worship God, and profess their faith according to their own conviction of Christian truth and duty, in every way which is not contrary to morals or good order, or to that obedience to government which the word of God enjoins. And we, therefore, humbly present to your Majesty the expression of our earnest hope, that the Religious Liberty which is now enjoyed in Sardinia by your Majesty's gracious favor, may be secured to all classes of your Majesty's subjects, by bringing the laws of the country into harmony with this great truth.

Should your Majesty, under the blessing of God, accomplish this most desirable and important object, it will not only be the greatest benefit which your Majesty could confer upon Sardinia; but it will attract to your Majesty the admiration and the sympathies of all free and enlightened nations, and history will record your Majesty's honored name among the most renowned princes of Italy and her most illustrious benefactors.

To-day, at 11 A.M., in accordance with an arrangement made through Lord Palmerston and the Sardinian ambassador, resident here, a Committee had an audience of the King at Buckingham House, one of the royal palaces. Though in no respect entitled to any place among them, their courtesy led them to invite me to go with them in a manner that I could not decline. We rode, some ten of us, in the common London cabs, to the place appointed. The palace is a very large and commodious structure, though by no means remarkable either in architecture or furnishing. Here we were courteously received by chamberlains in the rich royal livery, who conducted us through passages as long as rope-walks, some twelve feet wide, with stone-floors, and a single breadth of carpeting, and here and there a plain uncushioned oaken settee. These brought us into a rather grand saloon, which opened into a large parlor, and served as an ante-chamber. This, like the audience-chamber itself, was richly and comfortably furnished, and had a few portraits on the walls. Except in the matter of *size*, I have seen many a private house in America arrayed with far more of cost and splendor. All this seemed strange to my democratic eyes, not less than the gorgeous dress of many persons present, in military garb, and having their well-padded breasts thickly studded with stars and orders.

We waited some ten minutes in the ante-chamber, rather nervously; for the English attach vast importance to such matters. The folding-doors were flung open with a sort of dramatic suddenness, and the deputation announced in a loud voice. We marched hastily in, ducking our frontispieces as we went, and halted in an irregular group in the awful presence of a crowned head, though at this time it had no crown to it, except such as all mortals have. Sir Culling Eardley, a most accomplished gentleman, and an ardent friend of religious freedom, read the Address in a distinct and impressive manner. As I was quite familiar with the terms of it, I took the opportunity of the reading to use my eyes rather than my ears.

As the result of my inspection, I am able to report that Victor Immanuel II. is a most prepossessing specimen of regal humanity. He is of full stature, has a well-fed aspect, fine intelligent features, light hair and complexion, and blue eyes. He was in full military costume, and leaned on a sabre with a simple ivory handle, and steel hilt and scabbard. At his left hand stood Count Cavour, his wise and able prime minister. At his right hand was Count d'Azeglio, his ambassador at London.

When Sir Culling had ended his reading of the Address, the Count d'Azeglio read a brief and well-worded reply. It was very satisfactory; and though it made no definite promises, it contained gratifying assurances of the intention of the Sardinian government to respect the rights of conscience. The reply being finished, we again made our best bows, and commenced a backward movement of five or six yards toward the door, somewhat like the oxen which Cacus dragged into his den by

their tails, so that their tracks might not lead toward his place of retreat. Only, in our case, it would have been as well if Cacus, or some body, had steered us by our coat-skirts. For a poor man behind me, in his retrograding progress backed down upon the side of the door, which threw him right in my rear. Just as I was stopped up by this misadventure, a heavy-heeled aristocrat came down excruciatingly upon my unfortunate toes. With fortitude worthy of a tortured Indian, I neither winced nor cried out, but sidled and limped across the privileged threshold.

We were soon joined in the ante-chamber by Count Cavour, a man of fifty years, stoutly-built, and of a remarkably sensible and business-like mien. He conversed with us for some time in French. The substance of his remarks was, that religious liberty was respected by the Sardinian government, both from moral principle and as a matter of judicious and sound policy. He thought that the business could not stand in a better position than it now occupied, and that it would not be well to press the matter any further at present.

At the close of the conversation, I was introduced to the Count, who seemed quite surprised and gratified to learn that I was an American Protestant, on my way to preach this winter at Rome. He suggested that it would be necessary for me to procure an authorization from the Roman government, which might be a matter of difficulty. On being informed that our worship had been authorized for the past five years, he appeared to be both pleased and surprised. He made me promise to call upon him at Turin, which I shall hardly fail to do. After this we quitted the palace, whose yard was thronged with troops, and went our ways.

Thus ended this ceremonial, which I was happy to have witnessed, such opportunities being rare. I can not but hope that good will result from it. Yet my expectations are less sanguine than those of many of our English brethren, who think that if religious toleration were secured in Southern Europe, there would be a general and quiet throwing away of the Romish yoke and superstitions. I am not sure, however, but that some degree of repression helps the depth and sincerity of convictions, and makes the converts better, if they be not so numerous. Still the claims of conscience are to be asserted and secured as far as possible, because they are just and right in themselves, and vindicated by that avenging God, who "hath ordained his arrows against the persecutors."

The following is the answer which the King of Sardinia gave to the Address of the Protestant Associations of different denominations:

GENTLEMEN: I thank you for the mark of sympathy that you have come hither to give me to-day. The reforms which have hitherto marked my reign are the most sure index by which to judge the principles which direct me; to be durable, they must advance with the spirit of the age, and be governed by the laws of prudence. I am pleased to think we agree upon this point. It is very agreeable to me to see the efforts which I have made to assure liberty of conscience in my States worthily appreciated by the principal representatives of religious opinion in England. My subjects have equally understood my sentiments in this regard, and have shown themselves in every respect worthy of the emancipation which has been granted to them on this important point. I take great pleasure, gentlemen, in seeing, in the parity of these tendencies, another bond the more between our two countries.

It is intended, I believe, to call a meeting of the signers of the Address and others, friendly to its sentiments, to hear publicly the King of Sardinia's official reply. Such an occasion would be one of great interest, and likely to call forth some very able speakers. Truth loses nothing by judicious discussion, except what rust may be rubbed off; and all such loss is gain.

Yours most truly,

A. W. MCCLURE.

MISS BUNKLEY'S BOOK.—CONVENTS.

THIS volume is one of the most important that, for a long time, has issued from the American press. It is exceedingly valuable in many respects, but chiefly as a fair, full, intelligible, and reliable exhibition of convent life. It completely lifts "the veil" from the daily life of the nun; and dispels that charm of mystery which has given it such seductive and fatal interest to many sensitive and imaginative natures. It reveals in the open and unflattering light of reality, the wearisome sameness, the mechanical *routine*, the exhausting toil and privation, the crushing drudgery, the slavish obedience, the stagnation of feeling, and the privation of all human sympathy, which make the existence of a nun so dreary, and usually hasten her to an untimely end. It is an unnatural mode of existence, and also unchristian; for the God of nature is the God of grace, and our Maker and Redeemer is offended and dishonored when the harmony of his work is broken in his redeemed creature, man.

The book before us does not deal in "awful disclosures;" nor does it drag out to view the secrets of those "priests' prisons for women," in a way to excite or gratify a gross or a morbid taste for "horrors" or tales of crime. It is most pure and chaste in its tone and tendencies. No father need dread to place it in the hands of his unsuspicious and susceptible child,

"Who walks,
In maiden meditation, fancy free."

And yet the perusal of these pages will leave a deep impression that the life of the nun is odious, and of immoral proclivities. We feel almost sure, that no parent, though he were the sincerest of Romanists, can read these pages with candor, and ever after bring himself to place his daughter within conventual walls even for the temporary purposes of education, so great must be the danger that she will be inveigled into the cheerless and hopeless condition of a "vowed sister."

The statements of Miss Bunkley are made with the earnestness of one who has a deep sense of the wrong and misery she has suffered in consequence of the delusions into which she was led; but they are made with admirable delicacy and moderation. Nor has she been less happy in her selection of an editor, to prepare her work for the press, and to furnish it with additions required to make it as useful and instructive as it is. The result of the combined efforts of author and editor is the production of a work, designed, we doubt not, to a wide celebrity, and a lasting value.

Miss Bunkley's narrative adds confirmation, where, to be sure, none was needed, of the fact that nuns are very short-lived. The frightful *per centage* of mortality among them demonstrates that their rules of living systematically violate the laws of health, and consequently infringe the sixth precept of the decalogue, "Thou shalt not kill." Consumption, that fell destroyer, is regarded as the *natural death* of the nun, a sort of *euthanasy*. With their severe labor and unhealthful diet, with their scant bedding and damp cells, they are almost certain to take severe colds; and these, being quite neglected, soon become confirmed cases of pulmonary disease. It is nonsense to ascribe their predisposition to this fatal malady, as their apolo-

gists do, to their labors among the sick; for there is no such predisposition observed among *other* hospital nurses.

The reason why the nuns are suffered to die off as soon as threatened with symptoms of pulmonary disease, without an effort to arrest it, seems to have escaped Miss Bunkley's penetration. At the risk of being reviled by the spurious and sickly charity of the age, we will assign the real reason of this cruel and atrocious neglect. It is thus ordered by the chief managers of these concerns *for the purpose of increasing their wealth.* They insatiably crave richer endowments, having great confidence that gold gives power. Now the more rapid the succession of inmates, the more quickly does the convent grow rich. Every nun brings an endowment with her, a sort of dowry as "a spouse of Jesus Christ." Sometimes the amount of property which she merges in the conventual estate—for the vow of poverty requires her to give up all that she hath—is very large. But suppose that in a convent capable of keeping one hundred nuns, each brings a donation of only five hundred dollars, which is a very small allowance. This creates a fund of fifty thousand dollars to begin with. If the average life of nuns were twenty-five years, and it ought to be more if it were properly cared for, then this fund would be paid in four times over in the course of a century, making the respectable capital of two hundred thousand dollars, to say nothing of the accumulation of income. But if the average life of nuns can be reduced by hard work, hard living, and hard usage, to *ten* years, or even *five* years, then instead of four there will be ten, or twenty instalments of fifty thousand dollars paid into the capital stock of the concern in the course of the century. The temptation thus to enrich rapidly these institutions, and so to increase the power and influence of their managers, is irresistible to Roman cupidity. And this wholesale killing off of their poor victims by subjecting them to a mode of life almost certain to superinduce disease and death, is not only justified by the old plea that the end sanctions the means, but it is also sanctified by the hypocritical pretense, that it expedites the "sister's" passage to paradise!

In our country, the possibility of accumulating property with speed is so great and tempting, that this high-pressure system is enforced with the greatest rigor. Though the conventual life is exceedingly foreign to the genius of our American people and of our free institutions, the austere features of that mode of life are maintained here with a severity almost unknown in similar establishments in Europe. This is done only to force a more rapid succession of crops from the luxuriant field.

The grand practical lesson taught by the disclosures of the book, and by the facts and arguments of the editor, *is the imperious necessity of laws, to provide for the strict and careful inspection of all conventual establishments; or, what would be better, for their entire prohibition on their present plan.*

It is strange that this matter should be overlooked as it is, especially in a country where the people are so jealous of any restraint upon personal liberty. Private or irresponsible individuals would not be allowed for any other purpose, to rear buildings wherein men are to be incarcerated, strong as castles, barred and bolted night and day, vigilantly guarded, and with more than masonic secresy observed as to all that is done in their recesses. Neither pub-

lic sentiment nor common law would tolerate them. Asylums for the insane, whom it is necessary to keep under close restraint in kindness to them, as well as from regard to the common good, must yet be kept as open as possible to the public view, and to the visits of friends of the inmates; so that none may be deprived of liberty without necessity, or suffer, if their confinement be indispensable, from needless rigor or harshness of treatment. Even our prisons for criminals of every grade are made accessible to visitors under due regulations. Their wardens are not left unwatched as to the manner in which they exercise their functions. Not only are there *inspectors* appointed, whose official duty it is to make careful examination as to the sanitary condition and the discipline of the penitentiaries and houses of correction, and to make full reports of the same; but it is usual for the legislatures to make annual visitations, by large committees chosen from their own members. The complaint of any convict is sure to be heard; and his grievances, if he have any, can not fail to be redressed. And shall less justice than this be meted out to those who, being neither lunatics nor convicts, have yet of their own accord surrendered themselves to be confined, ostensibly for religious purposes, during the whole term of their lives, or any part of the same? Are these innocent persons to be subject to a secret discipline, and to an irresponsible controlling power, such as the state will not suffer her own officers to exercise over madmen and murderers?

Is it said that the monks and nuns have *voluntarily* renounced their liberty, and relinquished the protection owed by the state to every citizen? We answer, first, that *some rights are inalienable;* and chief among them are the rights of conscience, and of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." No man can strip himself of such rights as these, and for ever put them out of his own power, any more than he can strip himself of his immortality, or of his responsibility as a moral being. To concede that any one person can cast off such rights, is to render them less sure to all other men. They can only be made absolutely secure to all mankind, by declaring that it is impossible they should be alienated; and that all contracts for their divestment are *contra bonos mores*, and *ipso facto* null and void.

We answer farther, in the case of individuals who, by special vows or engagements, whether religious or of any other kind, have attempted voluntarily to abjure their personal liberties, that so far from having thereby forfeited their title to public protection, they have but strengthened the obligation of the state to keep them under its watchful care with even greater jealousy. Such persons, like orphans left unprotected, are the *wards* of the state, which is to see to their welfare. In their case, it is the manifest duty of the state to do all that may be requisite to enable them to resume unhindered their natural rights, if they shall ever choose to do so. Provision should also be made that the recluse shall not be subjected to hardships or austerities which he did not anticipate or understand, and which, therefore, formed no part of his pre-contract, if contract it can be called. Neither should it be permitted that he or she should be subjected to a mode of living or discipline deleterious to good morals or longevity. Surely, in such matters, they ought to be shielded by the ægis of the law, not less than apprentices or factory-children.

The very *structure* of a convent calls for legislative interference. Who that sees the deep foundations, the vaults and subterranean cells, the secluded cloisters, the massive dead-walls, the barred windows, the ponderous doors, the huge bolts, can regard all this as designed merely to keep intruders out, especially in a land where law and order reign? No: this is the apparatus of confinement; and is evidently intended at least as much *to keep in those who are in*, as to exclude such as have no business there.

If the internal regulations of convents are such as they should be, they will suffer no detriment from fair and open inspection. Nay; it would remove from them the dark clouds of suspicion which now hang over these dreary retreats; and might possibly raise them in the general estimation. But if, on the contrary, they refuse a proper and equitable inspection, the clouds of suspicion ought to condense into showers of popular conviction, which, like a sweeping rain, should wash away every vestige of their strong foundations.

That very great abuses, tyrannies, vices, and crimes have been perpetrated within conventual walls, is a matter of historical certainty. Ample proof of this can be furnished from Romanist historians of undoubted authority. Miss Bunkley's book, though supplying but a small part of this evidence, affords much more than enough to demonstrate this point. But, aside from the abundant proof of actual cruelty and oppression practised in such places, the known and acknowledged liability of irresponsible power to be abused, and more especially when exerted in secret, is of itself reason enough for providing by law for the careful and systematic supervision of such establishments by competent official authority.

Nothing is more common than for people to mistake their calling. And every principle of justice and general expediency requires, that there should be ample opportunity for correcting such mistakes as far as may be possible. That many persons have thus mistaken their calling in devoting themselves to the monastic condition, is beyond all doubt. That this will often be the case with the young and inexperienced, who enter upon that course of life, is to be expected as a thing of course. The writings of Liguori and other monkish casuists, evince this sufficiently by their long and labored arguments to satisfy the consciences, or content the minds of such monks and nuns as have been hurried into convents by parents or guardians, or interested friends, possibly under deceptive representations as to the charms or benefits of monastic life, or even under an almost irresistible pressure of constraint. Many unhappy persons, who perhaps entered the convent under some transient freak of disgust at the world, or some effervescent fit of enthusiasm, or some baseless dream of a life of imaginary perfection, find at last, that they have "mistaken their vocation." But it is too late. The vows of God are upon them! Or rather, the will of their superiors, and the locks of their jailors, are upon them; and they must abide the miseries resulting from this mistake of a life-time, a mistake which admits of no remedy. They can only escape like a convict from his dungeon, to be ever haunted by the terrors of extradition.

We contend, therefore, that whether the inmates of the convents are to abide therein for life or for a less term, it should be under a judicious police arrangement. There ought to be such inspection and supervision, as that all

who chose might leave them and return to their proper duties as members of civil society; and all who thought proper to remain, should do so only under sufficient guarantees of protection from oppression and abuse. All the clamor which Romanist priests and editors may raise against the proposal to enact laws for these purposes, are so many loud confessions that the interior of the convents will not bear examination and exposure to the light of day.

The simple truth is, and the sooner it is recognized and acted on the better, no such things as priests' prisons, or any other private prisons, ought to be allowed in a free country under any form or pretense whatsoever. All places for the confinement of human beings ought to be exclusively under the power and management of the civil government. Government alone ought to possess the power of incarceration; and that power may only be exercised in accordance with the law of the land. To be able to keep man or woman under restraint, whether with or without their consent, is a prerogative of the state, which it is bound to reserve entirely to itself, and most rigidly to inhibit its assumption by any person or persons whatsoever.

As regards the possible violation of the rights and liberties of the inmates of such places as convents, the state is bound to care for the individual in preference to the corporation. The individual is made by God, the corporation is a creature of man. What God, therefore, has given to the individual as an integral part of his personality, man can not rightfully take away; but what man has given to the corporation he has framed, he may revoke and resume. No individual can be as dangerous to the state and its common weal, under a free government, as a corporation may. For the individual has but one life; and the corporation has many in one. Yea, the corporation lives for centuries, accumulating wealth without limit, and the power and influence which wealth secures; while the individual soon dies, and his wealth is dissipated, and his power at an end.

And it is especially true of conventual corporations, that the state ought to give them no advantage or authority over the individual citizen. For the very genius of these institutions is hostile to the prosperity, and even to the *existence* of the state. If it be right and meritorious for some young men or women to devote themselves to the seclusion and celibacy of the monastic rule, it must be right and meritorious for all to do the same. In case this conviction should become general, where then would be the family? What would become of all the mechanism of social life? What, in a single generation, would become of the state itself? The principle of monasticism, thoroughly carried out in practice, would annihilate civil government; and for the government to permit it would be madness, and to encourage it would be a suicidal policy. We say, therefore, that the state is bound, by express legislation, to favor each individual within conventual walls, rather than the terrible and crushing corporation into whose engines he may have fallen.

If the law shall effectually provide, that every recluse who will, may return to the bosom of society at pleasure, the whole monastic system, which is anti-social in its nature and workings, would be shattered at its centre. The source of its strength would be dried up; and all its traces would disappear. The law ought to denounce all promises, pledges, or contracts to desert the duties

of life and abnegate the rights of humanity, as in violation of sound morals, perilous to the commonwealth, and consequently void of all binding force and power. No person should be held to execute such an agreement, any more than he should be held to keep an engagement to rob a bank, or to defraud the revenue.

This view is in full accordance with the first principles of Christian ethics. When Methodius saw one of the Syrian pillar-saints fastened by a chain to the top of the column which he was never to leave alive, he sent for a smith, and commanded the irons to be removed, adding the noble remark, "That the only chain fit to bind a Christian is love." To substitute for this, where it never existed, or has vanished away, physical force or restraint, is equally condemned by the rules of evangelical morality, and by the laws of natural justice.

But if they must be suffered, the law ought to provide for their frequent and thorough inspection by persons entitled to the public confidence. It should be further required, that the edifices should be built without that formidable array of cells, grates, and bars, which give them their usual prison-like appearance. Next it ought to be demanded, under heavy penalties, that no person shall enter upon the monastic life, without first personally appearing before some magistrate of competent jurisdiction, and declaring their intention; and then receiving from him distinct information that the party making such declaration is, and ever will be, at full liberty to leave the convent at pleasure, and will be protected in so doing by the strong and paternal arm of the law. The law should also provide that every inmate of the convent proper shall be constantly furnished with all the keys needful to secure egress from all the premises at any hour of the day or night. There should also be provision that no novice or professed "religious" of either sex shall be removed from one convent to another, without notice duly given to some local magistrate near either convent, who shall make record of the same, to the end that no one may be spirited away, or removed from legal surveillance and protection. There is still another feature which ought to be incorporated into the law, and that is a requirement that no one shall be allowed to enter the novitiate under the full age of *thirty* years; so that it may be done as an act of mature reflection, and with as little detriment as may be to matrimony, which it is the interest of the government to guard and cherish.

It is not impossible that legislation of this character might take off something of the romance and mystery which make up so much of the seductive charm of monasticism with inexperienced and impressible minds. But this is of very small importance compared with the security of the inestimable right of personal liberty.

The best enactment, however, that could be made would be one that should PROHIBIT ENTIRELY the establishment of convents as being prejudicial to the public interest. This is done in several European states, as well Romanist as Protestant.

In a country like ours, no safeguard of freedom should be omitted. All invasions of it ought to be made impossible, so far as that can be effected by wholesome laws and official diligence. Liberty is jealous. She is keenly sensitive to every threatened infringement. The saying of Patrick Henry has become the American's motto, "Give me

liberty or give me death!" It is better to die as freemen, than to live as slaves. And if we and our children are to be safe from the encroachments of tyranny, we must never forget that "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

THE PAPAL ALLOCUTION ON AUSTRIAN AFFAIRS.

Since the January number of our Magazine was issued, we have received an official copy of the Pope's recent allocution, in relation to the Concordat between Austria and Rome. It fully sustains the representations contained in the analysis of the treaty we published in that number, and gives something additional. It would be of little interest and scarcely worth recording if it were merely the expression of the private views of Pius IX. whose name it bears; but as the exponent of the policy of the Papal court, and of the interpretation put upon the provisions of the treaty whose ratification it officially proclaims, by the Sacred College, it has a value, and for the purpose of future reference as well as to furnish our readers with a specimen of Papal ambition, intolerance, and cupidity and a development of Rome's true spirit, we give it a place in our columns.

It will be observed, that no provision is made in it for the protection of the rights of conscience, in respect to Jews or Protestants, of whom there are large numbers in the Empire. They are passed over in silence as though unworthy of notice, or fit only to be crushed or expatriated. And "the 'Faith,' the clergy and the churches are to be avenged by the utmost penalties of canon and imperial laws, upon any who presume to deviate from the authorized standards of dogma and worship."

We commend the serious consideration of the document to all those who profess to see no call for discussions, respecting Romanism, and no propriety in efforts to enlighten the people and thus to prevent its further spread in the United States, and no need of evangelical missionary labors to rescue the millions of the human family who have fallen under the influence of its corrupting and destructive power. We think its candid examination will convince any man that Rome is now no better than she was centuries ago and that neither Christianity, nor civil nor religious liberty, nor pure morality can long abide under her sway. But to the document referred to:

THE POPE'S ALLOCUTION.

The following Allocution of Pope Pius IX. was read in the Secret Consistory of the 3d November:

Venerable Brothers: In our apostolic solicitude for the universal flock of the Lord, and in our paternal love for all the faithful nations under the sway of the imperial and royal house of Austria, since the commencement of our supreme pontificate, we have directed, venerable brothers, all our cares and most ardent desires to the regulation of the affairs and interests of religion in that vast empire. Thanks to the infinite bounty of God and to the piety of our most dear son in Jesus Christ, Francis Joseph, Emperor and Apostolic King of Austria, what we desired has come to pass, and it is for us the subject of the greatest joy. Scarcely had this religious prince taken the reins of government in the empire of his fathers than, earnestly responding to the just wishes expressed by us and by our predecessors, well knowing also that our

holy religion and its salutary doctrine are the sources of peace, security, and true honor to nations, he saw nothing more urgent and glorious than to merit the blessings of good men by confirming and protecting the freedom of the Catholic Church throughout the extent of his dominions. Daily increasing in zeal and filial devotion to correspond to our solicitude, he earnestly requested of us to conclude with him a Concordat which, in virtue of our apostolic authority, should regulate ecclesiastical affairs in his empire, and afford increased facilities for meeting the spiritual wants of his people. You easily understand of yourselves, venerable brothers, with what joy we received these solicitations from His Imperial and Apostolic Majesty—solicitations so laudable, and which, corresponding so perfectly with our own desires and those of our predecessors, are a striking proof of the love which this eminent prince bears to religion. Accordingly, we employed without delay our care and solicitude to conduct to a happy issue an affair of so much importance; and, with God's aid, we have concluded with our most dear son in Jesus Christ this desired Concordat, which has been signed by the plenipotentiaries chosen on both sides—that is to say, in our name, by our dear son, Michael Viale Prela, Cardinal Priest of the Holy Roman Church, sent by us and by the Apostolic See as Pro-Nuncio to his Imperial and Apostolic Majesty, and recently named by us Archbishop of Bologna; and, in the name of the illustrious Emperor and King, by our venerable brother, Joseph Othmar, Archbishop of Vienna. This Concordat, now ratified by us and by the Emperor and King, will be, according to the orders which we have given, laid before you, with the apostolic letters by which we have regularly and solemnly confirmed it.

But for the moment, we could not avoid communicating to you, openly and publicly in this august assembly, the extreme joy caused us by this happy event, since we have been enabled to regulate what in this vast empire concerns the dignity, authority, doctrine, and protection of the rights of the Catholic Church and of the Holy See, as also what can establish and daily increase more and more the spiritual welfare of those nations. In short, venerable brothers, in this Concordat it has been before all provided that the Catholic Apostolic Roman religion shall be preserved and protected hereafter in all the empire of Austria, and in each of the States which constitute it, and that it there shall possess and enjoy all the rights and prerogatives which belong to it in virtue of its Divine institution and of the canonical constitutions. And as the Roman Pontiff, Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, and successor of the Blessed Prince of the Apostles, has of divine right a priority of honor and jurisdiction throughout the entire Church, this Catholic dogma has been expressed in most precise terms in the act itself, and the plenipotentiaries have discarded from it, radically eliminated and banished the opinion—false, perverse, fatal, and entirely contrary to this divine priority of its rights—an opinion always condemned and proscribed by the apostolic see—according to which the *placeat* or the *exequatur* of the civil government should be obtained for what concerns spiritual things and ecclesiastical affairs. Therefore it has been ruled, that the mutual relations of the bishops of the Austrian States, and those of their clergy, and of the faithful population with our apostolic see, in all that regards spiritual matters and ecclesiastical affairs, should be perfectly free, without ever being subjected to any royal authority of any kind whatever. Equal care has been taken to provide for what the sacred pontiffs should enjoy of full and entire liberty in the exercise of their episcopal functions, and that they may thus daily devote themselves better to what the salvation of their flocks demands of them—for it has been agreed, among other points, that the archbishops and bishops may communicate without restraint, not only with their clergy and the faithful people, but, moreover, publish pastoral letters, instructions, and mandates touching ecclesiastical matters—receive clerics, in order to educate them according to the rules laid down by the holy canons, admit them to holy orders, and remove from among them those whom they shall judge unworthy; also, that they may create minor benefices, found and organize parishes, prescribe and indicate prayers and public supplications, assemble synods, whether provincial or diocesan, and impose censures, and interdict to the faithful bad books, contrary to religion and good morals. And as it is of the highest interest for civil and religious society that youth should be early formed in piety and sound doctrine, it has been provided that, in all public and pri-

vate schools instruction be given to all Catholic youth in a manner perfectly conformable to the doctrine of the Church. Thus the bishops will have, in virtue of their charge, not only to direct in every locality the religious instruction of youth, but also to watch with the greatest care that in no part whatsoever of education there enter any thing contrary to the Catholic religion and good morals; and, therefore, all the primary schools shall be subjected to an ecclesiastical inspector. It has been likewise prescribed that the bishops shall have, as the holy canons desire, the direction, government, and administration of the clerical seminaries; and that the establishment and choice of superiors, professors, and masters of *belles lettres* and sciences, and the admission of pupils, shall be left to their prudence and discretion. But it will never be permitted, without the authority of the bishops, to teach any part either of theological science, the science of canon law, or catechism.

All ecclesiastical cases, those especially which concern faith, the sacraments, and the rights of the sacred ministry, and regard only the ecclesiastical court, shall be submitted to ecclesiastical judges, who will pronounce according to the laws of the sacred canons and the prescriptions of the Council of Trent, even in cases of marriage, leaving to the lay judges to take cognizance only of the matter pertaining to the civil relations of the marriage. It will pertain to the same ecclesiastical authority to pronounce on the existence of the acts of betrothal, and on the consequences of the prevention of marriage, observing, with the greatest care, the prudent and wise dispositions of the same Council of Trent, and the letters apostolic of our predecessor Pius VI., of happy memory, commencing with these words, "Auctorem fidei." The bishops shall enjoy their full right to inflict on clerics who shall merit them the penalties established by the canonical laws, or such others as they shall judge appropriate, and they shall be entirely free to impose censures on all the faithful who shall dare to violate and transgress the ecclesiastical laws and the canonical prescriptions. Much, however, as the right of patronage ought to be submitted to the ecclesiastical judge, we have consented that the questions of simple lay patronage be submitted to the civil tribunals. We have also granted, in consideration of the circumstances of the times, that the lay tribunals may take cognizance of cases purely civil concerning clerics, and we have agreed to permit the cases of crimes and offenses committed by them, and which fall under the jurisdiction of the laws of the empire, to be referred to the same tribunals; but the bishops shall be immediately informed of all particulars respecting such matters, and all the deference which the clerical state exacts shall be observed.

As the house of God should be honored by all with a pious and respectful zeal, all possible measures have been taken to preserve securely the respect and immunity of places of worship. The religious Emperor and King himself will never permit that the Catholic Church, its faith, its Liturgy, and its holy institutions be damaged or disrespected in any manner, whether by word, writing, or act; or that the bishops and sacred ministers be prevented from fulfilling their charge and their duty, especially when they have to defend faith and morals, and to maintain ecclesiastical discipline. Besides, he will lend his powerful assistance in the execution of the sentences pronounced by the bishop against the clerics, and regard with solicitude the honor due to the sacred ministers; not only will he not permit any thing to their prejudice, but, still more, he will direct all the magistrates of his empire to render to the archbishops, the bishops, and the clergy, the honor due to them.

Among the other points agreed upon, the Apostolic See has guarded intact and inviolable its right of erecting new dioceses and assigning to them new limits, when it shall perceive their utility for the faithful; and his Imperial and Royal Majesty, in the exercise of the privilege conceded to him by the Holy See of presenting and naming bishops, will take hereafter, and before all, the advice of the prelates of the ecclesiastical province. The first dignity of a metropolitan Church, archiepiscopal and episcopal, shall be conferred by us and by our successors, unless it belong to a private lay patronage, in which case the second will be substituted. His Imperial Majesty shall continue to nominate to the other dignities and canonical prebends, with the exception, however, of those which belong to the free collation of bishops and of the right of patronage legitimately acquired. These

canonical prebends shall be granted to the priests who, invested with the qualifications required by the canons, have distinguished themselves in the exercise of the sacred ministry, in the management of ecclesiastical affairs, or in the professorship of the sacred sciences. It has been also agreed that in the metropolitan and episcopal Churches where a canon penitentiary and a canon theologist, and in colleges a canon theologist, are required, according to the prescriptions of the Council of Trent, they shall be named as soon as possible; and that these offices shall be conferred according to the prescriptions of the same Council and the pontifical decrees. As the choice of worthy and efficient priests is of great importance to the salvation of souls, it has been agreed that all parishes shall be conferred as the result of a public concursus, and strictly conformable to the prescriptions of the Council of Trent; and, as regards the parishes under ecclesiastical patronage, the patrons will be bound to present one out of three proposed by the bishop at his pleasure. Anxiously desiring to give to the illustrious Emperor and King an enduring testimony of our good will, we have most freely conceded to him and his Catholic successors in the Austrian empire, the nomination to all canonries and parishes, subject to the right of patronage arising out of a religious or scientific foundation, with this condition, however, that one of three, designated by the bishop as most worthy, after a public concursus, shall be chosen. It has not been omitted to provide a suitable dotation for poor parishes in accordance with the circumstances of things and times. But, as the canonical institution gives right over ecclesiastical property only, it has been decreed that all those who shall be nominated to any benefice whatever, great or small, shall not assume the administration of the estates pertaining thereunto without having obtained in due form the canonical appointment. It has likewise been agreed that, in order to enter into possession of cathedral churches and their estates, it will be necessary to observe scrupulously the prescriptions of the holy canons, and especially of the pontifical and Roman ceremonial, all usage and custom notwithstanding.

As to the religious communities, which when well administered, are always most useful to the State and to the Church, and are their noblest ornaments, it has been agreed that they shall be governed according to the rules of their own institution, by their Superiors-General residing at the holy Apostolic See, considering always, of course, the authority of the bishops, conformably to the prescriptions of the sacred canons and of the Council of Trent; that these Superiors-General shall have right to communicate freely with those religious communities that are confided to them, and to visit them at their pleasure; and that all the regular orders shall have right without any obstacle, to observe the rules of their institution or congregation, to receive novices, and admit to the religious profession. The bishops shall have the right to establish in their dioceses orders or congregations of both sexes, observing what the holy canons have with so much wisdom prescribed.

Nor has it been forgotten to confirm and protect, with all the care and attention possible, the natural right belonging to the Church of possessing all sorts of property; for in this same Concordat it has been established that the Church can of itself acquire freely new possessions by every legitimate title, and that the property of the estates which it now possesses, or may acquire hereafter, ought to be altogether intact and inviolable. Therefore the religious foundation, as well old as new, can never, without the permission of this Apostolic See, be abolished or united, the faculties conceded in this respect by the Council of Trent remaining, nevertheless, entire and intact. The ecclesiastical estates shall be administered by those in whom the holy canons recognize the right of administration. But as the most pious Emperor grants from the public treasury a subsidy to the poor churches, and will not cease to grant it, these same goods can neither be sold, nor submitted to a notable change without the consent of this Apostolic See and of his Majesty, or of those to whom they should think the duty of imposing the charge pertains. Besides, as there are in the empire estates called funds of religion and study, and which, in virtue of their origin, are the property of the Church, these estates shall be administered in the name of the Church itself, and the bishops shall supervise them according to the dispositions determined by this Apostolic See and his Majesty. As to the revenues of the religious foundations, they will be employed

for the Divine worship; the churches, seminaries, and all works pertaining to the ecclesiastical ministry, even to the funds themselves, after a previous concert between this Apostolic See and the Imperial Government, may be divided into permanent ecclesiastical donations. But the revenues of the funds of study shall be employed only for the advantage of Catholic instruction, according to the pious intentions of the founders.

The emoluments of the vacant benefices shall also belong to the funds of religion; and, in the provinces of the Austrian empire where these funds do not exist, mixed councils of commissions shall be instituted, by which shall be administered the property as well of the episcopal income as of all the benefices during their vacancy, according to the form and rules prescribed by the Apostolic See and his Imperial Majesty. But, as because of the sad condition of the times, in most part of the countries under Austrian rule, the ecclesiastical tithes have been suppressed by the civil law, and that, in consequence of particular circumstances, they can not be reëstablished throughout the whole empire, deferring to the request of his Majesty, and taking into consideration the public tranquillity—which interests religion so much—we have granted and decreed that—the right of exacting the tithes remaining intact and secure wherever it actually exists—in other localities, in place of those tithes, or as compensation, donations may be assigned by the Imperial Government in property and in permanent funds, or in state rents, for the purpose of being distributed to all those who had the right to exact tithes. And these donations, as his Majesty has also declared, shall be assigned without any kind of change, and received and possessed by the same title as the tithes which they replace.

Finally, it has been ruled, that all the other questions relative to persons and things belonging to the Church, and which are not mentioned in the articles of this Concordat, shall be treated and resolved according to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and the usage and discipline approved by the Apostolic See; and at the same time it has been established that the laws, ordinances, and decrees, in whatever way they may, up to this time, have been expressed in the Austrian empire, and in each of the countries subjected to it, and which are contrary to the present Concordat, are legally abolished and abrogated; and that this Concordat is in vigor, and is regarded as the law of the state throughout the entire extent of the Austrian dominions.

Such are the principal points of this last Concordat, which we have briefly communicated to you, venerable brothers, to the end that we may offer up together great thanksgivings to the Father of Mercies and God of all Consolation, who has given a wise and enlightened heart to our most dear son in Jesus Christ, Francis Joseph, Emperor and Apostolic King of Austria. Let us humbly supplicate this all-powerful God, by the merits of Mary, His Most Holy Mother, preserved from all spot of original sin, and of all the blessed in heaven, whose festival we are now celebrating in the joy of one common solemnity, to remove from the dominion of the Church all errors and calumnies, and to grant, in His clemency to the Christian people who serve it, a great increase of graces.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

In the light of this new article of Romish faith, we have a fair opportunity to test the pretensions of the Church of Rome to infallibility, unanimous consent, etc. We believe that no Papist with the slightest claim to literature will stake his reputation on a denial of the facts which we here subjoin on the subject.

The first prominent advocate of this doctrine was the celebrated Richard de St. Victor, of whom Johannes Major testifies in *De Gestis Scotorum*, l. 3, c. 12, that "he was expressly the first who held that Mary was free from original corruption." The doctrine was sanctioned also by the Council of Basil, (sess. 36.) And yet after this

the Popes Sixtus IV. and Pius V. allowed full liberty to all either to believe or disbelieve the dogma. And this ordinance of Sixtus is expressly sanctioned by the Council of Trent, (sess. 5.) Paul V. and Gregory XV. sought to reverse this decision, and strongly asserted the immaculate conception. And their procedure was followed up by the University of Paris, which refused to admit any one to the degree of D.D. who would not pledge himself to maintain this doctrine. Such is the history of the doctrine and the decision of the present Pope and Council is known to all.

But how does this doctrine comport with the early history of the Church? This question we shall answer on the authority of some of the most celebrated writers and divines of the Romish Church.

Cardinal CAJETAN brings against it fifteen of the Fathers, and asserts that their decision in this matter can not be overthrown. And SALMERON (Disp. 51, in Rom.) asserts that other writers produce TWO HUNDRED similar testimonies against it; and BANDELLUS almost THREE HUNDRED.

BANNÈS (Part i., cap. i. art. 8,) asserts as an undoubted fact that "All the holy fathers agree in this, that the Virgin Mary was conceived in original sin."

CANUS (lib. vii.) in like manner affirms that "all the holy fathers, who refer to the matter, affirm with one voice that the blessed Virgin was conceived in original sin." And he adds, that "the contrary doctrine has neither Scripture nor reason for it. Because no traditions can be derived to us, except through the bishops and holy fathers, the successors of the apostles; and it is certain that those ancient writers did not receive any such doctrine from their predecessors.

These facts are known and undisputed. Chillingworth endeavors in vain to call the attention of his antagonists to them. Popish writers have always had, however, something else to do. But in view of the matter, we ask:

1. Can the intelligent men among the laity of the Roman Church, seriously believe that it is right for uninspired men thus to assert a doctrine to be true, and demand assent to it as true, which the whole primitive Church denounced as false?

2. If the present Pope and Cardinals *are right* in requiring faith in this article, were not Sixtus IV., and Pius V., and the Council of Trent *wrong*, in leaving the matter optional? But in either case, what becomes of infallibility?

Many other interesting conclusions can be drawn from the above; but for the present let these suffice.

FOREIGN FIELD.

BELGIUM.

THE sad picture drawn in the following article by "Philos," one of the Vice-Presidents of the Society, who has seen much of the practical working of Romanism in Europe and elsewhere, must be viewed with painful interest by every friend of evangelical religion. And yet it is reliable, in every part, though Protestants who have been far removed from Papal society, and accustomed to read the Scriptures, and to think for

themselves, can hardly conceive how such a state of things as is here represented, can be brought to exist among a people nominally Christian. The gross idolatry and the blind credulity of the people on one hand, and the boldness and arrant knavery of the priests in deceiving them on the other, are truly shocking. But they are the natural fruits of the Romish religion. They obtain wherever the Papacy gains dominion. It is gratifying, however, to know that in the midst of all this darkness and delusion, the work of evangelization is begun in Belgium, and is making good progress in connection with the labors of our missionaries and others resident there. But to the article:

RELIGION IN BELGIUM.

In many respects, Belgium with its four millions of people is an interesting country. It is chiefly so in its religious aspects, to the eye of Christian benevolence. During a sojourn in Brussels, its beautiful capital, sometimes called Paris in miniature, and a visit to other cities, we gathered up, by personal inquiry and observation, some interesting facts concerning its religious condition. It furnishes a sad and impressive illustration of the blinding influences of the "Man of Sin."

No people, perhaps, are more devoted to Romanism than are the people of Belgium. The Roman Catholic religion exerts full sway over the minds of the masses of the population. It is one of the strongholds of Popery. A blind and active zeal is manifested for all that is connected with its soul-destroying system. There is an unblushing idolatry in much of its worship. Much money is lavished upon building and adorning churches with shrines and virgins. Superstition spreads her raven wing over the land, and multitudes implicitly trust their immortal interests to a deceiving priesthood. The word of God is disregarded. The traditions of men have full sway, and forms and ceremonies are substituted for spiritual worship.

The Virgin Mary is exalted and worshipped as divine, and receives more homage than does the Saviour of the world. More offerings are made to her than to him. More confidence is placed in her than in Christ the Lord.

The following is part of a prayer addressed to the Virgin Mary. It is translated from a printed paper hung on the walls of a church in Mons.

"I salute you, My Divine Queen, amiable Mary. I adore and bless the design which God has of glorifying you in this holy place, and of glorifying himself in you. To contribute as much as is in my power to the admirable purpose of this supreme majesty, and to render the honor due to you, I cast myself, Holy Virgin, at the foot of the throne of your glory, and with my humble respect, offer you that which all earth and heaven render to you. Amiable mediatrix between God and man! It is particularly in this holy place, you exercise this glorious quality, and open to poor mortals the treasures of divine favors which without your aid Heaven would refuse. Refuge of the miserable! Protectress of all who call upon you, particularly in this holy place! Condescend to pour on me your grace, and to help your poor servant, who will do his utmost to proclaim at all times and in all places your praise and your honor to the greater glory of God and His Holy Mother."

Each church has its miracle-working image or relic, and on the anniversary of the patron-saint, there is a grand procession of this image or relic. On these occasions confessions are made, penances are performed, indulgences and pardons are granted. Thousands of persons undertake their yearly pilgrimage to this or that church to worship the miracle-working relic.

According to the traditions of the Romish priests, in the year 1050, the people living in a large village about twelve miles from Brussels, were accustomed to hear on the feast-days consecrated to Mary, music in the air—a concert formed by angels. This news spread around the country, and crowds came to hear it. The effect on those who visited the place was such that the lame were cured, the blind received sight, all who were sick received relief, and every person was filled with joy. Every one praised the Mother of God. The villagers began to build a chapel to her honor. They chose an eminence for this purpose the valley below being damp and unwholesome.

The Holy Virgin wished to change this valley into a place of joy and consolation, so that every night angels came and carried away the building materials into the valley, and placed them in the same order as the masons had placed them on the hill. Several times the people attempted to build the chapel, but as often as they did so, their efforts were frustrated by the angels Not understanding at first how the building materials were removed, several priests watched during the night in order to discover the mystery. At midnight they saw a light which was more brilliant than the mid-day sun. The queen of the angels appeared, attended by these celestial spirits, demolished the work done by the people during the preceding day, and carried the materials to the valley below, placing them in the same order and manner as they had been fixed on the hill. The Virgin pronounced these words and then disappeared: "*I will live in this valley because I have chosen it.*" The chapel was built in the valley accordingly.

Some time after this there was found in the valley a box of most exquisite workmanship which was made by angels. Miracles were performed by it, so that no doubt remained of its being a chosen instrument of the mother of God to console and relieve all those who had recourse to her in their afflictions. In addition to the box, the church contains:

1. A large piece of the † cross, upon which Christ was crucified
2. A part of Christ's seamless coat.
3. Some of the Virgin's hair.
4. Her belt or girdle.
5. Her scissors.
6. An ivory needle, with which the mother of God sewed. Miracles in abundance were performed by this instrumentality, it is said, and also devoutly believed, by the Roman Catholic population of the country.

Hundreds of persons visit the place during the year. They will crawl upon their hands and knees a considerable distance before entering the church, and on leaving it, thus doing penance on this pilgrimage, so that the stone pavement around the altar is worn by the long use of the poor votaries of idolatry. Nor is this very singular. Almost every village and town has some "lying wonder," and the religion of the Roman Catholics in this country consists, much of it, in the most devoted attendance on such like religious mummery. Idolatry reigns in this land as among heathen nations. It is indeed more refined in its outward appearance and is thus more captivating. It is more pleasing to the human heart, and therefore wins the affections. It comes clothed in the mantle of the Christian religion, and with unholy boldness assumes to itself the authority of God as its passport to the hearts of men.

It is the aim of the priests to insure and prolong this state of blissful ignorance. They strive to captivate by gaudy pomp and show and ceremony. They labor to draw all the people within the circle of their enchantments by surrounding them with their most alluring and devoted agents.

From a printed document we learned that there are upwards of *four thousand five hundred priests*, which are paid by the state; but the number of those supported by the fees paid to the Church is *greater* than that supported by the government. Belgium is divided into six bishoprics, and is well supplied in every town and village with regular clergy.

Such is a glimpse of the spiritual condition of Belgium. It is a sad picture to gaze upon in this otherwise beautiful country, where once lived holy men of God, and who were martyrs of Jesus and laid down their lives in his cause. Here is a wide field for evangelical labors, effort, and prayer, upon which to sow broadcast the "seed of the kingdom," which, by God's blessing, will in due time yield an abundant harvest. PHILOS.

SPAIN.

THE LIGHT DAWNING.

THROUGH long and tedious centuries the darkness and the chills of Papal night have rested on the Spanish kingdom. Under the exactions and influence of the Romish hierarchy, the energies of the people have waned away, until there is scarcely a "lower depth" to which they can descend. But notwithstanding the vigilance and opposition of the priests, the Scriptures have lately been introduced into the country, and many copies have been circulated. The spirit of inquiry

upon governmental, moral, and religious subjects, has been awakened by them, in various parts of the land, and in different ranks of society. It has made its way into the Cortes, or national legislature, and effected a number of salutary reforms. It has produced an important movement in behalf of religious freedom, which we earnestly hope may not be a failure. But what will be the result, it is impossible now to tell. We trust that all Christians will pray that God may crown the efforts of the friends of freedom in that kingdom which has been so long shrouded in darkness, with speedy success, and bring the resources of the nation to aid in the redemption of the world from Papal errors, and all other forms of sin.

The following extract, from the speech of Don Rafael Degollada, deputy from Barcelona, addressed to the Cortes, which was furnished us by a friend, will be read, in this connection, with interest. The deputy said:

"For my part, gentlemen, I know of only one tribunal competent to settle religious questions, and it is a tribunal from which there is no appeal—the tribunal of conscience. My conscience shall never be at peace, if I abstain from revealing to you that which I feel, yea, all that I believe on this grave question. My conscience alone, I ought to say in presence of this Congress, has conducted me to these benches. My friends know, and the province which I represent know as well, that I had resolved in 1843 to retire from politics; this question of toleration alone has made me renounce my resolve, and accept the title of a Deputy to the Cortes.

"Gentlemen, this question of religious liberty, if we may call that a question which is rather a constant aspiration of the soul, irresistibly longing to render to God that worship which it believes worthy of Him—this question must always be for nations, the most vital of all questions. I therefore defend the enjoyment of toleration, as I do that of religion itself; for intolerance and exclusiveness are essentially contrary to the Christian religion. Jesus Christ in announcing the near approach of the reign of God, that is to say, the triumph of the Gospel, has added these words: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' Well, if thus it is, if 'the gates of hell can not prevail against the word of God,' why this puerile and impious fear of the ruin of the Christian religion? It is a negation, a doubting of the truth of the prophecies, an unbelief in their veracity, and nothing more.

"He who employs constraint, physical or moral, to assure himself of the fulfillment of the prophecies, that man has no real faith in them. The friends of intolerance underrate the power of truth, and inflict a grevious blow on the religion they profess to protect. Truth is itself irresistible. It is like light; our mouths can not deny its existence, when our eyes behold it.

"One grand inconvenience of intolerance is, that it hastens, or but little retards the propagation of what is called evangelical doctrine. If those pertaining to other communions are in error, instead of repelling them, ought we not rather to attract them towards us with tenderness and charity? Can they look upon us with favor, when we persecute them, and calumniate them, without ever allowing them a word in self-defense? If these poor souls are in error, let us leave off injuring them; let them practise their own form of worship beside our own, and truth will sooner or later triumph; those whom we can not conquer by our words, let us at least propitiate by our good works, by our example and the practice of Gospel graces, the most efficacious and rarest of all means of propagandism. Intolerance necessarily supposes the use of constraint, physical or moral, by the Inquisition, by fines, or exile. But this constraint, is it consistent with the spirit of the Gospel? What do we see in the Old Testament? God employed the forces of nature to defend his elect: the destroying angel cutting off in one night the first-born of all Egypt: Joshua exterminating the Canaanites, etc. But in the New Testament, how different the spectacle! Here all is good will, peace, and love. The means our Saviour employs to secure the triumph of the new system, are not the plagues of Egypt, pestilence, fire, and sword; but persuasion, the giving of sight to the blind, health to the sick,

life to Lazarus; and when Peter has recourse to the sword to defend him, his Master causes him to restore it to its scabbard; 'Those who take the sword,' said he, 'shall perish by the sword.' Well, are they true Catholics, who call themselves disciples of Christ, when they appeal to intolerance and force in proof of it? Jesus has said to them in the person of Peter, 'Put up thy sword into its scabbard;' and remember that the Son of God while dying, prayed for pardon on his enemies.

"I will not fatigue the attention of this Assembly, but I will only add that intolerance exposes that Catholic religion which it wishes exclusively to protect, to a very serious danger; for one day or other, men may apply to it the law of retaliation. It is more than half a century since this question has knocked at our doors and presented itself to every serious mind, for the solution which it has received at the hands of every civilized people; Turkey, even, despite its fanaticism, is before us in this respect. Religious unity, which gentlemen so much desire, I desire as much as any man; but I desire a real, not a factitious and deceptive unity, such as we now possess. If by unity the committee mean an exterior unity of worship and forms, that already exists, since we can not profess here any other worship than the Catholic; but if they mean a veritable unity of dogmas and creeds, they very well know that such a unity does not exist. They know that *there are not wanting many Spaniards who aspire to adopt another religion;* they know that their partisans, the priests, complain loudly in their pulpits, of a multitude of Catholics, as far from the Gospel, as they are from the Koran. Thus, where there are so many citizens living separate from the Catholic communion, under cover for the most part, of a thin veil of hypocrisy, to maintain a religious unity is in effect to maintain a lie with which no one is duped."

BRAZIL.

In the November number of the last volume, we informed our readers, of the safe arrival at Rio de Janeiro, the place of his destination, of the Rev. V. D. Collins, who went out in the summer preceding, to labor as a missionary under the direction of the Board. By a letter under date of September 27th, 1855, we learn that he had secured a situation in a Collegio having fifteen professors, and about two hundred and fifty pupils, where he has excellent advantages for acquiring a knowledge of the language of the country, (the Portuguese,) and where he can teach, a portion of his time. He says:

"Within the walls of this Collegio are many very promising youth, both from the city and the distant provinces of the empire; and were their education morally of the right kind, their influence on the country at large would be incalculable. I feel, therefore, that God has providentially placed me just where, of all other positions, I can soonest acquire the Portuguese language, and exert an influence for good. . . . . I teach some thirty pupils, devoting however, but *one hour* per day, in the recitation-room; but even there, I am enabled to impart many valuable truths.

"My social and private intercourse with the students is very great. . . . . My conversations with them are mostly on religious subjects, and many pleasant and profitable hours have I thus spent in their society. Being anxious to get the true pronunciation of the language, I spend much time with those who visit me, in reading the Portuguese Bible, making such selections as are impressive and pointed, and then inquiring or explaining the meaning. I find them all very ignorant of the Bible, and its contents—most of them having never before seen a copy, or if they have, there are connected with it no hallowed memories and truths, as the rule of their parents' faith, as the book of their own childhood, and as 'the word of God, able to make them wise unto salvation.' I have commenced circulating the Scriptures and religious books among them, as also through the city, and in all cases, they are received with real gratitude.

"For a few months I have concluded to spend a part of each Sabbath, in conduct-

ing a Sunday-school, and in preaching to the poor English, who work in the factories here, and who are truly a neglected class."

Thus Mr. Collins has made a beginning and has found much to encourage him, in his benevolent designs. Many such laborers are needed in that great empire, on which the night of the Papacy has rested so long, and where the grossest superstitions have been engendered by the unprincipled priesthood, which has had control of its religious affairs. This is evident from the occurrence in the capital of a

TORCH-LIGHT PROCESSION,

and a parading of the images of the Virgin Mary, and of Saint Sebastian, the patron saint of the city, and the offering of prayers to them, in order to check the progress of the cholera, mentioned in the following extract:

"The cholera, which appeared here about the time of my arrival, is now very fatal and spreading every week. The number of deaths per day in the city is over one hundred, and quite a panic prevails throughout the provinces. Of course the clergy have taken the usual steps in regard to the disease. While they have very properly collected large sums of money for the hospitals, they have at the same time paraded, with great pomp, by torch-light, through the city, the images of the Virgin, and St. Sebastian, ENJOINING UPON ALL THE 'FAITHFUL,' THE DUTY OF PRAYING TO THEM, TO CHECK THE 'MOLISTIA REINANTE,' as the cholera is styled."

CHILI.

CONVENT OF THE CAPUCHINS.

Now, my brother, let me give you an account related to me by a most worthy English family, most of the members of which have grown up in the country, confirmed also by common report, of the Convent of Capuchins, in Santiago.

The number of inmates is limited to thirty-two young ladies. The admittance-fee is $2000. When the nun enters she is dressed like a bride, in the most costly material that wealth can command. There, beside the altar of consecration, she devotes herself in the most solemn manner to a life of celibacy and mortification of the flesh and spirit, with the deluded hope that her works will merit a brighter mansion in the realms above.

The forms of consecration being completed, she begins to cast off her rich veil, costly vestments, all her splendid diamonds and brilliants—which, in many instances, have cost, perhaps, from ten to fifteen, or even twenty thousand dollars. Then her beautiful locks are submitted to the tonsure; and to signify her deadness for ever to the world, she is clothed in coarse gray cloth, called *serge*, in which she is to pass the miserable remnant of her days. The dark sombre walls of her prison she can never pass, and its iron-bound doors are shut for ever upon their new, youthful, and sensitive occupant. Rarely, if ever, is she permitted to speak, and *never*, *never* to see her friends or the loved ones of home—to enjoy the embraces of a fond mother, or devoted father, or the smiles of fraternal or sisterly affection. If ever allowed to speak at all, it is through iron bars where she can not be seen, and in the presence of the abbess, to see that no complaint escapes from her lips. However her bosom may swell with anxiety at the sound of voices which were once music to her soul, and she may long to pour out her cries and tears to those who once soothed every sorrow of the heart; yet not a murmur must be uttered. The soul must suffer its own sorrows solitary and alone, with none to sympathize or grant relief, and none to listen to its moans but the cold, gloomy walls of her tomb. No, no, not even the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that great alleviator of all the sorrows of the heart, is allowed an entrance there.

Nor is this all. Besides being condemned to a meagre, insufficient, and unwholesome diet which they themselves must cook, the nuns are not allowed to speak much with each other, except to say, "Que morir tenemos," "we are to die," or, "we must die," and to reply, "Ya los sabemos," "we know it," or, "already we know it."

They pass most of their time in small

lonely cells, where they sleep in a narrow place dug out in the ground, in the shape of a coffin, without bed of any kind, except a piece of coarse *serge* spread down; and their daily dress is their only covering. *Sleep!* did I say? Alas! "Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep, no more with his downy pinions lights on lids unsullied with a tear:" for *every hour of the twenty-four* they are aroused by the bell to perform their "*Ave Marias*," count their rosaries, and such other blind devotions as may be imposed. Thus they drag out a miserable existence, and when death calls the spirit to its last account, the other nuns dig the grave with their own hands, within the walls of the convent, and so perform the obsequies of their departed sister.

Thus, I have briefly given you not fiction! but a faithful narrative of facts in regard to conventual life, and an establishment marked by almost every form of sin, and yet making pretense of "perfecting the saints," by the free and gentle influences of the Gospel of Christ!!

Query 1st. What is done with all the money?

2d. What is done with the rich vestments and jewels?

3d. Where do the priests get all their brilliants to perform high mass and adorn processions?

4th. Where does all the hair of the saints come from, which is sold in lockets for high prices, as sure preventives of evil?

5th. Whose grave has been plundered to obtain *relics* to sell to the ignorant?

6th. Where does the Romish Church obtain her *surplus righteousness to sell* to the needy, and not to give it like our blessed Lord, "without money and without price?"

7th. Who is responsible for the *fanaticism* that induces a young female to incarcerate herself?

8th. Where is the authority in *reason*, in *revelation* for such a life?

9th. What the average length of life?

10th. How many die insane?

A young lady lately cast herself from the tower, and was dashed to pieces, being led to do it, doubtless, in desperation. The convents of this city, of the same order, require the same entrance-fee, $2000. Of course, none but the comparatively rich can avail themselves of this *perfection of godliness*."

Who will say that this mode of life has not been invented in order to cut short life as rapidly as possible, that the $2000, with all the rich diamonds upon initiation, may be repeated as frequently as possible?

Oh! how true it is, that Romanism is the same merciless, cruel, diabolical organization wherever it can fully develop itself, in all lands!

How truly is it denominated by the pen of inspiration, "the *Mystery of iniquity*;" especially that part of it relating to these secret institutions, and the whole order of the *Jesuits*.

The above account of conventual life is from a report of a Missionary of the Society in Chili, South-America. It confirms our views on that unchristian as well as unnatural mode of existence given in another place in this number, in our article under the head, "Miss Bunkley's Book — Convents," and it furnishes a strong practical argument for the prohibition by law, in the United States and its Territories, of Romish convents, as regulated by Papal laws and usages.

We trust that the subject will receive that consideration which its vast importance to the welfare of the public demands, and lead to that judicious and decisive action which a great, intelligent, and virtuous nation ought to take for the protection of the persons and rights of its citizens, against the arts and devices of the agents of a foreign prince, rendered doubly dangerous by their assumption of the garb and profession of religion. For already the fair face of our country is disfigured by the existence here and there of conventual establishments of the Carmelites, Redemptorists, Dominicans, Benedictines, and other orders, conducted by an alien priesthood, and various females banded together under the names of "Sisters of Charity," "Sisters of Loretto," "Sisters of the Sacred Heart," "Sisters of the Most Precious Blood," and such like names,

who, by the terms of their religion, have eschewed the duties and responsibilities of the domestic relation which God has appointed not more for the existence and usefulness of society, than for its protection from the worst of human passions and the most degrading vice, and who are evidently not above the power of temptation common to our fallen humanity.

At present, these establishments do not show the hideous features which they, at least in some cases, assume in countries where Papal influence and authority are supreme. The genius of our government and institutions necessarily exerts a restraining power, which holds them from excesses to which, otherwise, they might run. But they constitute part of a system which is strongly at variance with the interests of humanity, and merely wait the occurrence of favorable circumstances to visit upon our land all the horrors which they have inflicted elsewhere.

How many conventual establishments there are now in the nation, few Protestants, it is believed, know. And how many young females, guilty of no crime against individuals or society, and condemned by no law of the land, are shut up in their walls and doomed to a life which they did not anticipate when entering them, a life which is more dreadful to them than death, very few of the millions of our citizens conceive. The majority of our people have slept over the whole subject, and the indifference thus manifested has emboldened the priests to push forward the extension of the system, and the workmen are now busy in various places in the construction of additional establishments. But such facts as are revealed in this article, from the pen of our Missionary, in connection with things that are occurring around us, show that no time should be lost in examining the whole subject of Convents and Monasteries, and in legislating rightly about them.

HOME FIELD.

POVERTY, SUFFERING, AND BIGOTRY.

The following extract from a report of one of our missionaries in a Western city reveals a state of things among us, that few, perhaps, living in comfort and enjoying the privileges of Christian institutions, imagine to exist; and also the desirableness of maintaining with energy the missionary cause, by whose agency these abodes of wretchedness shall be visited, their inmates instructed and otherwise relieved, and, if practicable, raised to the condition of useful citizens.

There is no hope of the elevation of these poor and suffering people by Romanism, or the Romish Priesthood. There is no sympathy for the sufferer in the Papal System, and the subject soon learns by experience, the utter uselessness of applying for help to priest or bishop, as did Mrs. G., whose case is here given, unless his relief can in some way be turned to the advantage of the hierarchy.

Ignorance, superstition, bigotry, poverty, suffering, the natural fruits of the system, in respect to the people, may not be expected to meet the counteracting influence of the priesthoood,

whose interests lie in keeping it in active operation. Protestants must therefore gird themselves to the work, and follow their missionaries with their sympathies and prayers, and cordial and ample support. The missionary says:

"The reception I meet with in my daily visits is on the whole encouraging. I am made welcome to the abodes of the poor, the miserable habitations whose emptiness in mute eloquence speaks with far greater power to the sympathetic feelings of our nature, than the glowing rhetoric of the most powerful orator. To these abodes where few beyond their own level in society ever enter, your missionary is received at first with not a little degree of surprise, and often of suspicion; but by entering into their feelings, sympathizing with them in their wants and sorrows, I am generally listened to, with a degree of patience and even earnestness, beyond my most sanguine expectation. A few examples will, I presume, be sufficient to illustrate the idea.

"Among the families visited was a Mrs. G——, the mother of the girl and the four boys who, as I stated in my last report, were scholars in my Sunday-school. Oh! how hard a task to describe the misery within this dwelling-place! My heart aches at the bare rehearsal of what met my eyes. I found her squatted on the floor. There was not a chair, nor a bench, whereupon a person might sit, nor a table, nor bedding nor bedstead. The family lay down at night on the bare boards. There was not a dish inside that miserable abode, except a tea-kettle, two or three old bowls and plates, and a water-bucket. In fact the whole family was almost destitute of bodily clothing. I was much troubled at witnessing such a sight. I said to Mrs. G.: 'Have you made your case known to your priest and bishop?' 'I have, sir,' said she, 'and I shall never do it again. I went to Father M'Mahon, and got no redress; I then went to the bishop; he came with his cane in his hand where I was, and when I stated my case to him, he told me that he was as poor as myself.'

"I then conversed with her freely about the salvation of her own soul, and that of her children. I spake to her of the great and wondrous love of the Redeemer—how he pitied our race when he took upon him our nature, and died in the room of sinners. I told her of his sympathy for the hungry multitude that followed him, of his willingness to receive penitent sinners into his presence, and give them relief in their distresses, and that he turns none away that pleads with him for deliverance.

"I trust my visit has not been lost upon this poor family. I had to stand all the time I was with them, as there was no place upon which I could sit down.

"A particular friend, whose Christian compassion and charity abound more in *acts* than in *words*, to whom I made her case known, has clothed the children. He gave me $2 to purchase provision for them, which gave them an immediate relief. Immediately after the boys got the clothes, they started to show them to me. I met them on the street. The poor fellows gathered round me, apparently as glad as if they were the children of the richest man in the city. They are very punctual in their attendance on the school.

"Some time afterwards, while visiting in the same part of the city, a woman addressed me from her window, as I was conversing with some persons in a little court, next to her house, and giving them tracts. 'I am a Huguenot,' said she, 'please give me a tract.' 'Yes, ma'am,' said I, 'with all pleasure; and if you please, I will go into your house with it, and know if you are a good Huguenot. I went into her house, and after my usual manner, I looked round the walls, to know where I was. I perceived at first glance, *by the paper pictures hung around her house*, that either herself or husband, or both, were members of the idolatrous Church of Rome. I learnt from her, that her husband was one of those who claimed to be of Presbyterian descent, but was not a

member of the church. She herself was an adherent of the Pope of Rome.

"They are both from the north of Ireland. She had lived some time in the city of Glasgow, and had been a servant for two and a half years in a devoutly pious family of my acquaintance in that city. In that family she was taught to read the Scriptures. She said that she and her husband never had any difference about religion. She continued: 'I am not a bigoted Catholic. I have seen so much piety in Captain ——'s house, I know that such persons as he and his lady must have much of the love of God in their hearts, and if we believe the Bible they shall be eternally happy.'

"'You then believe,' said I, 'that what the Bible says is true?' 'Yes, undoubtedly,' she replied, 'I know that it is the word of God, and therefore must be true.' 'How comes it, then,' I asked, 'that you have these *pictures* hung round the room, contrary to the express command of God in the Bible?' 'The Bible,' she answered, 'does not say any thing about pictures.' I repeated the second commandment, 'Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any *likeness* of any thing that is in heaven above or in the earth beneath,' etc., etc. '*This* picture,' said I, 'has the name of Christ on it, with the likeness of a man; *that* has the name of the Virgin Mary, and a female figure. Are they not supposed to be the *likenesses* of things in heaven?—and you keep them there contrary to God's express commandments. You are a transgressor of the divine law, and that publicly, as long as you keep them there.' She attempted to exonerate herself, stating that her husband brought them home, and hung them upon the nails there, and that they were never 'blessed,' but she never thought before that God forbade the making and keeping of good images, such as these were.

"I prayed with her before I left, and she thanked me for what I had spoken to her. She promised most faithfully that she would go with her husband to an evangelical church. May God in his infinite mercy bless to her conviction and salvation the truth spoken, and the supplications that have been, for the first time, offered up in her dwelling-place, in behalf of herself and her husband.

"When going to my Sabbath-school, on the 28th of October, I noticed a poor female, with an empty basket on her arm, and leading two little boys by the hand, passing along the lower street, on Hard Scrabble. I knew her to be a stranger in that district, asked her a few questions, and ascertained her place of residence. I called the following day to see her. She was in a low cellar, with her two little boys. When I met her with the basket on her arm, on the Sabbath, she was going to gather coal along the banks of the river. In the space of the last month, I have met with upwards of sixty families in nearly the same condition.

"Another female, in a house in which I called, on offering her a tract, said to me: 'To what religion does this tract belong?' I answered: 'The Christian religion.' 'And shure,' said she, 'I'm a Catholic, and belong to the holy Catholic Church.' I replied, 'I am a Catholic, too, ma'am, and the tract I offer you, speaks of Christ and his Church.' 'But,' said she, 'I belong to the Catholic Church of Rome, sir.' 'That,' I answered, 'is no reason for you to refuse a tract that speaks of Christ. Have you a Bible in your house?' 'No, sir,' said she. 'The Bible and tracts say an *open* confession is good for the soul. I hate all such. They speak against our Church, and our guides will not permit us to read them. In place of reading them I would use every effort to destroy them.'

"Such is the spirit and tendency of Popery."

IRISH MISSION IN LOUISVILLE, KY.

In a recent report Mr. J. McBride, our Missionary in Louisville, writes:

"Our sewing and Sabbath-schools are quite as prosperous as when I last wrote. Last Sunday, although the weather was unfavorable, we had over *one hundred scholars* in attendance. Last Friday about *seventy* were at the sewing-school. In the

Sabbath-school we have *twenty* regular teachers, and enough attend occasionally to make the number twenty-four.

"During the last month I have made two hundred and forty-eight visits to families and individuals for religious purposes.

"Since I have been engaged in this work I have received in calico and money to the amount of ($30.50) thirty dollars and fifty cents, for the benefit of the sewing-school. I have received small contributions of second-hand clothing from some of the churches, which I have given to the most needy. I have just received a fine lot of various articles, and have the promise of more, which I shall dispose of to the best advantage.

"Hitherto the school has been furnished with books from the Depository of the Sunday-School Union. Last week I received a ten-dollar library from the same source, but have not yet obtained a book-case. That I expect to get this week. I have also obtained ($17.30) seventeen dollars and thirty cents for the poor, which sum has been disposed of according to the wishes of the donors.

"I am gratified to be able to state that the Irish Catholic population are becoming more accessible, and are sending a larger number of their children to the schools than at any former time since my labors began. The interest taken in our work by the Protestant population has also received an impulse from the prosperity of the schools, and seems to be increasing."

IRISH MISSION IN SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

The Rev. T. Jordan, who labors at this station, and has collected a Sabbath-school of children of Romanists, and maintained it against much priestly opposition, writes:

"What has been done, and is now doing, in this field, affords me encouragement in my work. Some have publicly come out from Romanism, hazarding the odium, evil-speaking, and threatenings of violence from their neighbors and relatives, and have sought and found reception in Christian churches. Others more timid abide in the profession of the religion of their parents, but in words they deny the absurd doctrines of Popery.

"Since my last report, besides my daily labors, I preached, on two occasions, in the prison, to the criminals confined there. They number nearly one hundred, the most of whom are Irish Romanists. I visited them also, on two occasions for personal conversation, on their own request, communicated to me through the jailer and his wife, who are Christian people. Laboring from house to house brings me in contact with parties of divers dispositions. I meet some professing Romanism, of Galio's spirit, some like Hymeneus and Alexander, of whom Paul wrote, others of the spirit of Jannes and Jambres, and some who wrathfully say to me: Why teach us? We are Romanists forbidden by our priests to listen to you. Others (Romanists) defend me against such reproaches, and others hear me respectfully, and even gladly, and invite me to call on them often.

A Romish organization has been formed in Springfield within the last or the preceding month, and a treasury formed to arrest the work, which is going on in the ranks of the Papists. The members go from house to house among Roman Catholics, saying that they are delegated by the Church of Rome to forbid the children of Romanists entering any Sabbath-school conducted by Yankee Protestants, and to forbid the parents themselves to listen to Protestant teachings, or to read the Bible or Protestant books; and also that they are authorized to require all to attend, every Sunday, in the Romanist Church, to be instructed in the Papal catechism on pain of having their names reported by them to their priest, and subjected to ecclesiastical penalties. Previous to the last two or three years not more than *one* Romanist family out of every *sixteen* would accept the *Child's Paper*, or the *Messenger*, or any religious tract or book. This year *fifteen* Romanist families out of every *sixteen* in the city receive them gladly, and read

them, and some subscribe to get them for themselves and their children. This is gratifying evidence of the progress of evangelical sentiment among the Romanists in Springfield."

We have a number of interesting reports from French, German, and other missionaries in the home field, whose publication, for want of room, must be deferred until next month. In the mean time we are happy to inform our readers that while there is no abatement of the hostility of Rome to the Bible, religious freedom, and all evangelical truth, our work among the people is progressing, at most of the stations, in a very encouraging manner.

OUR TRACTS.

We beg to call the attention of Pastors, and others interested in the enlightenment and salvation of Roman ists, to a tract published some time since by our Board, entitled, "*The Bible.*"

It is admirably suited for distribution among that class of our citizens. It is furnished, as are all others, at the rate of 15 pages for one cent. It ought to be offered, at least, to *every* Romanist in the nation. Romanists are now found in almost every parish in the land, and very few of them read the Bible. *Why not circulate this tract among them?* Perhaps pastors and officers of churches, and of local Tract Societies, to whom is intrusted the business of procuring the tracts to be used in their neighborhood respectively, have not known of the existence and excellence of this tract. Orders addressed to Mr. Edward Vernon, at this office, conveying the money in payment for the tract, will be attended to without delay. We earnestly solicit orders for it.

We hope, too, our friends will remember the tract "*Do you pray for Roman Catholics?*" and order and circulate it *generously* in their respective places of abode. Every Protestant in the nation ought to have a copy of this tract, and *to read it often.* If one or two persons in a town or church would interest themselves in procuring and causing the circulation of this tract in their neighborhoods respectively, we are confident that a deep interest would soon be manifested in our country for the salvation of that great class of our citizens who now are under the influence of the "Man of Sin." Being deeply convinced of this, and of the importance of the measure, we beg that it may be tried at once, and effectually. Put it into the hands of the tract distributor this month, and let it be repeated a short time hence. It will cost but little to do it, but the result may be of immense value to the Church and the world. Try it.

The Board have other good tracts of which we may speak hereafter.

DEATH OF MR. USMAR.

Mr. John Usmar died at his residence, in this city, in the month of October last, aged about four-score years. He was a native of England, emigrated to Canada, and thence came to New-York about twenty-five years ago.

Though in an humble sphere, he has been identified with the Protestant cause since that time. He was the carrier of *The Protestant*, which was published in 1830 by the Rev. G. Bourne; and subsequently of the various papers, *The Protestant Vindicator*, *The American Protestant*, and *The American and Foreign Christian*

Union, which, at various intervals, succeeded it. He carried the last-named paper till a very short time before his death.

Mr. Usmar was a sincere, humble, and lovely Christian. He adorned his profession by a life of consistent evangelical piety. He was ardently attached to the work of Missions to Romanists, as also to other benevolent enterprises. And in his will, considering the amount of his property, he made liberal bestowments to several of them.

Most of our city readers will doubtless remember the aged pilgrim, with his thin white hair, benevolent expression of countenance, and kind salutation, who brought this magazine to their doors. But he is gone, we doubt not, "to the rest which remains to the people of God." In testimony of his attachment to our Society, he left it a legacy.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

1. THE NEW-YORK WATCHMAN AND CRUSADER, is the name of a new weekly journal recently commenced in this city, by Signior G. F. Secchi De Casali. In the *Prospectus* the proprietor says:

"This Journal is successor to the *New-York Crusader*. It is designed to make it a model anti-Papal paper, excluding all personalities in regard either to political men, or to private individuals. It will be a champion of the Protestant cause, embracing in a brotherly union all believers in evangelical doctrines, of all countries and religious denominations. It will be a journal of a high tone—never compromising principle for popular patronage, nor truth for fiction."

Rev. NICHOLAS MURRAY, D.D., Rev. H. GALPEN, ALEXANDER GAVAZZI, Prof. S. F. B. MORSE, and other eminent writers, whose names will appear in due time in the paper, are amongst its regular contributors.

Subscription, $2 per annum—invariably in advance. Office, 298 Broadway, (third floor,) New-York.

2. MY FATHER'S HOUSE; OR, THE HEAVEN OF THE BIBLE. By JAMES M. MACDONALD, D.D. This is a 12mo volume of 376 pages, comprising twenty-two chapters, on as many different topics connected with the subject of which it treats. It does not pretend to have exhausted its theme, nor to be wise above what is plainly revealed, but to establish the reader in the Bible's view of the future state of blessedness, and to point out the way by which it may be attained; and thus to guard him against the many false notions and popular delusions, in respect to the spiritual world, that are now afloat.

Among the topics discussed are: The Place, Seeing God, The Glory of Heaven, The Guide, The Preparation, Recognition, Angel-Companions, Who will be there, Who will not be there, Little Children in Heaven, etc. The work is well calculated to do good. It is well got up, with good paper, and large and readable type. It is published by Mr. Charles Scribner, 145 Nassau street, New-York.

3. THE SKEPTICAL ERA IN MODERN HISTORY; OR, THE INFIDELITY OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY THE PRODUCT OF SPIRITUAL DESPOTISM. By T. M. POST, is also from the press of Mr. Scribner.

This is an able work, and happily meets an exigency of the times. The author has met the sophistries and assumptions of Romish, Prelatical, and infidel writers, in a clear and masterly manner, and relieved the cause of Protestantism and evangelical religion from the charges they have sought to fix upon it; and demonstrated that Romanism or spiritual despotism, which they have so zealously lauded, is itself the cause of infidelity and a large brood of vices and crimes. It is incompatible with the welfare of society. The book is worthy of a wide circulation; and notwithstanding some peculiarities, and even infelicities which may be found in it, we think it can not fail to do good, as well as to interest the reader, and we wish it a large sale.

It is a 12mo of 264 pages, handsomely got up.

4. THE ACTS AND MONUMENTS OF THE CHURCH: CONTAINING THE HISTORY AND SUFFERINGS OF THE MARTYRS. By JOHN FOXE. "Foxe's Book of Martyrs," abridged or unabridged, has been so long before the public that the design and excellent character of the work must be generally understood. But the edition edited by the Rev. M. Hobart Seymour, M.A., and just published by the Messrs. Carter, of this city, is an improvement upon any of the editions hitherto published in this country. It is comprised in one large octavo volume of 1082 pages, embellish-

ed with a number of engravings, together with a likeness of the author.

Under the judicious hand of the editor, much redundant matter has been expunged. Coarseness and indelicacy in some narratives have been removed. Latin and Greek quotations have been converted into English; and errors in dates have been corrected. The value and interest of the work have been further enhanced by the addition of an appendix of more than 80 pages, containing accounts of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew—of the Spanish Armada—of the Gunpowder plot—of the Irish Rebellion in 1641—and of the executions in England, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and the grounds of them.

When so much is done, as now, to introduce Romanism into our country, and to secure for it the popular favor, the appearance of this work, in this attractive form, is very gratifying. A perusal of its pages will do much with the reader to strip the system of Popery of its deceptive colors, and to guard the unwary against its snares. It should be in every family's library.

5. THE WONDERFUL PHIALS, AND OTHER STORIES TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH. By ANNA. A neat and interesting 18mo volume of 323 pages, containing twenty-one stories, suited to the capacities of children, and to render essential aid in their right moral training. It is worthy of a place in every family. It is published by Mr. M. W. Dodd, Brick Church Chapel, City Hall Square, New-York.

6. THE WORLD'S JUBILEE. By ANNA SILLIMAN, is also from the press of Mr. Dodd.

This is a handsome 12mo volume of 343 pages. The design of the book is to show that the earth will not be annihilated at the final judgment, but that God designs to renew and perpetuate it, for the glorious and everlasting kingdom of his Son; that it will be inhabited, not only by the children of the resurrection, but also by men in the natural body, who will continue to live and multiply upon it throughout the everlasting ages.

In the discussion of the various topics comprised in this book, there is a seriousness and earnestness which disclose the deep conviction of the writer of the exact agreement of the Scriptures with the theory of the school to which she evidently belongs. The work is executed with ability, and while it will probably meet with little approbation in certain quarters, it will doubtless be hailed with much satisfaction in some others.

Receipts

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Jan. 1, 1856.

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